



Fiber Friendly Nutrition



Here are some simple measures to assure you get your 25-35 grams of fiber:

- ◆ **Keep Fruits and Veggies Handy**– Prepare fruits and veggies ahead of time and keep in easy view in the refrigerator to snack on, add to salads, yogurt, or cereal, or simply eat them plain. Decorate your kitchen counter or table with bowls laden with beautiful fresh fruits.
- ◆ **Switch Entirely To Whole Grains**- Get in the habit of buying brown pastas, rice, breads, and cereals. One cup of whole grain spaghetti has 6 grams of fiber, 1 cup of whole grain oatmeal has 4 grams of fiber, and 1 cup of wheat bran cereal has 24 grams of fiber.
- ◆ **Rethink Your Snacks**- Nuts are high in fiber and nutrition. If you have a sweet tooth, graham crackers and fig bars are tastier and more filling than a bag of chips. Fat-free, sugar free yogurt with a bit of high-fiber cereal and fruit is filling and healthy.
- ◆ **Mix in Legumes**– It's easy to boost fiber by 10-20 grams per meal by throwing in legumes! Add them to most any soup! When making rice or pasta, add red beans or garbanzos. And top a steak, chop, or chicken with split peas or spicy black beans.
- ◆ **Put Some Variety in your Salad**– Spinach greens, kale, arugula, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, cranberries, raisins, tomatoes, shallots, blueberries, dried cherries, apples, mandarin oranges, nuts, bean shoots, all make a fun, interesting change to any salad. Be creative and salad will suddenly be the favorite part of a family meal.

Following these guidelines takes little more than conscious choices. But the results of being fiber friendly will be well worth it.

The fact that we need fiber is a common refrain. Dietary fiber sometimes called "roughage", is the indigestible portion of plant foods. Fiber pushes food through the digestive tract, absorbing water and easing elimination. How much fiber is enough? The [Institute of Medicine](http://www.instituteofmedicine.org) recommends eating 14 grams of fiber per every 1,000 calories consumed. Where can we get fiber without obsessing over labels? And at little extra cost?

Fiber is loaded with vitamins and minerals. Foods like fruits, vegetables, legumes and whole grains are often low in fat and calories, but rich in vitamins and minerals. They help "fill you up" without needless calories. Both the FDA and the American Dietetic Association (ADA) claim that enough fiber helps improve digestive disorders, aids in lowering cholesterol and high blood pressure, and helps to prevent obesity, diabetes, cancer, and heart disease.

Resource: <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/fiber/NU00033> & <http://www.iom.edu/>